

Stay Out of Hot Water

If you've got an electric hot water tank, by the time hot water makes it from your tank to your showerhead or tap, it's probably already lost about 15 per cent of its heat. You can help reduce that heat loss by:

- Wrapping the tank in an insulation blanket, if it is more than seven years old. Blankets are available at your local hardware store.
- Wrapping the first metre (three feet) of both the hot and cold water pipes extending from your tank.

And of course, consider using less hot water when you can by:

- installing low-flow (9.0 litres per minute) showerheads
- taking shorter showers, and
- washing your clothes in cold water.

Deal with Your Devices

As long as they are plugged in, all electronic devices—such as computers, printers, modems, televisions, cell phone chargers, coffee makers, DVD players, stereos and anything else with a clock, timer, adapter, memory or remote control—continue to draw power even when you're not using them. If you've got a lot of devices (the average North American home has a whopping 25 or more!), that can add up to a big drain on your wallet.

To reduce your phantom load:

- Simply unplug your devices when you're not using them, or turn off the power bar/surge protector. (The only exceptions are cable TV converters/set top boxes for pay-TV/HDTV/Digital TV and personal video recorders: these are better left plugged directly into the wall to preserve their settings.)
- Enable the "sleep" or "power save" mode on your computer. This way, your computer will automatically save energy, even if you forget to turn it off when you're not working at it or away from your desk.
- Use a laptop. A typical laptop computer has a maximum power consumption of 15 watts. A typical desktop PC and monitor, on the other hand, consumes about 10 times that, or about 150 watts. Ensure the laptop has an ENERGY STAR® label.
- If you're in the market for a new TV or other electronic device, look for one with the ENERGY STAR® label. It will use up to 50 per cent less energy while providing the same performance as a less-efficient model.
- For all new electronics or appliances, ask yourself whether you really need all the extras. Can you survive without a timer on the coffee-maker or a remote control for your fan?

Want to find out more about making your home Power Smart? Contact us:

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bchydro.com/powersmart

BUSTING TWO POPULAR COMPUTER MYTHS

- Computers are not as sensitive as you may think. You can start up and turn off your computer as many times as you want: it will not damage your computer's components – in fact, it will save money on your energy bills and reduce wear on your system at the same time.
- Screen savers do not save energy. In fact, some screen savers actually use more electricity to create complex graphics. If you use a screen saver, be sure to set your monitor to display images only for a short, predetermined time and then enter sleep mode.

BC HYDRO POWER SMART TIPS

ENERGY SMARTS AROUND YOUR HOME

DISCOVER HOW LIFE IN A POWER SMART HOME IS MORE AFFORDABLE, MORE COMFORTABLE AND A LITTLE BIT EASIER ON THE PLANET.

There are many good reasons to save energy around your home, but here are three of the best: to save money on your household energy bills, to reduce the amount of energy going to waste around your home, and to lighten your impact on the environment.

Fortunately, it's not hard to make a real difference—both to your energy bills and to our planet. A good place to start is by understanding exactly where the energy goes in your home, and then targeting those areas where simple changes, many no- or low-cost, will have the most impact.

THE FACTS ABOUT ELECTRICITY USE

Ever wondered which appliances or devices use the most electricity in your home (and cost you the most to run)?

Well, it varies from household to household, but if you live in a typical single-family house, duplex or townhouse in British Columbia:

- heated by electricity, your space heaters account for the largest chunk of your electricity bill, using about 44 per cent of all electricity consumed in your home, while your water heater uses about 18 per cent of all electricity and your large kitchen appliances use about 12 per cent. Computers and televisions follow at 11 per cent, lighting at nine per cent, and laundry at four per cent. Other items—such as electric blankets, telephones, hot tubs and small kitchen appliances like coffee makers—take up the remaining two per cent.
- heated by other means (by natural gas or oil, for example), your large kitchen appliances are your biggest consumers, making up about 27 per cent of your electricity bill, followed by computers and televisions at 26 per cent, lighting at 19 per cent and space heating at 10 per cent. Laundry uses nine per cent of your electricity, other items six per cent, and water heating three per cent.

WHAT THIS MEANS IN DOLLARS

On average, if you live in a typical single-family house, duplex or townhouse in British Columbia, you pay about:

- \$738 a year for heat (if you have a home heated entirely by electricity)
- \$123 a year to run space heaters (if your home is heated mostly by fuel)
- \$270 a year for hot water
- \$151 a year to operate your large kitchen appliances
- \$82 a year to work on your computer or watch TV
- \$153 a year for lighting
- \$84 a year to wash and dry your clothes, and
- \$118 a year to operate your electric blanket, telephones, coffeemaker, blender and other electronics and small appliances.

SAVE YOUR HEAT

No matter how you heat your home—with electricity, natural gas or another fuel—there are a number of things you can do to reduce how much energy you use to keep warm. For example:

- Heating costs rise about five per cent for every degree above 20°C (68°F) that you set your thermostat. Lower your thermostat by one or two degrees and wear a sweater if you need to.
- Switch to programmable, ENERGY STAR® thermostats, for the whole home if possible or at least for the main rooms. A programmable thermostat works automatically: you set it once—for example, to turn down to 16°C at night and back up to 21°C in the morning—and it will continue to automatically adjust the room temperature for you. The result: you could save as much as 10 per cent on your energy bills.
- Add more insulation inside your exterior walls to help your home stay warmer in winter and cooler in summer. It's easy to add insulation in attics, basements and crawlspaces at any time, but you should wait until you are doing a renovation to reach other spots.
- Replace old or drafty windows and doors with ENERGY STAR windows and doors. These will allow less heat out during the winter (or in during the summer)—and net you year-round savings of as much as seven per cent on your energy bills, even more if you live in one of the colder areas of British Columbia. They'll also decrease outside noise and protect your belongings from sun damage.

TAME YOUR HUNGRY APPLIANCES

Buy ENERGY STAR

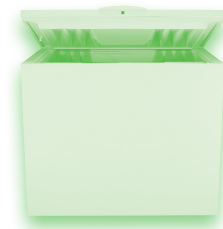
If you're planning to replace your old refrigerator, freezer, clothes washer or dishwasher, look for models that have earned the ENERGY STAR label. These are the most energy-efficient appliances on the market today, offering top performance and major energy and water savings—all in one neat package.

For example:

- Your refrigerator probably uses more energy than any other appliance in your home. ENERGY STAR refrigerators require about half the energy of models manufactured before 1993—and they are at least 20 per cent more efficient than fridges built to meet today's minimum standards.
- ENERGY STAR front-loading clothes washers use up to 50 per cent less water than non-ENERGY STAR, top-loading models. If you're paying for municipal water, that means big savings on your water bills.
- ENERGY STAR dishwashers are at least 25 per cent more efficient than dish washers built to meet minimum standards.

Optimize Your Fridge and Freezer

- Open the door to your fridge only when you have to.
- Set your fridge and freezer to their most energy-efficient settings—just cold enough, but not too cold. For fridges, that's 2 - 3°C (35 - 37°F); for freezers, it's minus 18°C (0°F).
- Locate your fridge and freezer as far as possible from any source of heat, such as a radiator or space heater, washer, dryer or furnace.



IF YOU HEAT WITH GAS ...

And you are planning to replace your current furnace, consider buying a new furnace with a variable speed motor (VSM).

VSMs are much more efficient than conventional motors and can ensure consistent circulation throughout your home, without wasting energy.

LOOK FOR THE ENERGY STAR® SYMBOL

Home products that have qualified for the ENERGY STAR label meet the highest standards for energy-efficiency.



Resist Your Oven

- Resist the urge to smell your brownies baking: every time you open your oven door, you lose about 20 per cent of the oven's heat. Look through the oven window instead.
- Self-clean your oven while it's still hot. You'll use less energy than starting with a cold oven.

Put Your Dishwasher on a Diet

- Run your dishwasher with a full load only—why wash empty space?
- Skip the heat-dry setting and let your dishes air dry, or use the economy or energy-saver setting.

Clean Up Your Laundry

- Wash your clothes in cold water. About 90 per cent of the energy your washer consumes goes to heating water. If you wash with cold water, you'll save that energy, and your clothes will come out just as clean.
- Clear your lint trap after every load. A clogged trap means your dryer has to work harder and use more energy than it should.
- Load the washer to capacity whenever possible. One large load of laundry will use less energy than two small or medium loads.
- Use the right amount of detergent. Too much detergent makes your machine work harder and use more energy, so check your machine's manual to find out how much you should use for your type of water (water is considered either "hard" or "soft"—contact your town or city council to find out what kind of water you have).
- A high efficiency washer saves money on your dryer use by spinning more water out of the clothes and allowing them to be less damp when put in the dryer.

Match the Appliance to the Job

Small jobs call for small appliances. Toaster ovens and microwaves use less energy than your large oven; electric kettles use less energy than stovetop kettles. Also boil only as much water as you need.

Adjust Your Lighting

There's more to cutting down on how much energy you use to light your home than just flicking off a switch when you leave a room—although that's a great start. To make a real difference, you should also:

- Change to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). CFLs use up to 75 per cent less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs while producing the same amount and quality of light, and they last 10 times longer. Choosing "soft white" or "warm white" CFLs will give you a warm, cozy looking glow in your living spaces. "Pure white" and "daylight" CFLs are great for bright, energetic workspaces.
- Put dimmers on your light switches so you can adjust light levels to suit what you are doing at the time— watching TV does not require as much light as reading a book, for example. Just make sure to match the dimmer to the light bulb: any incandescent bulb can be dimmed (this will also extend how long it lasts), but you'll need to buy specially marked dimmable CFLs.
- Light up your Christmas with energy-efficient LEDs. These light strings use up to 95 per cent less electricity than standard incandescent strings, last at least 10 times longer, are virtually unbreakable, and produce very little heat—reducing fire risk.

DON'T FORGET THE MAINTENANCE!

All appliances will work better and more efficiently over the long term if they are well maintained.

Damaged or misaligned door seals, for example, can cause major energy leaks, especially for ovens, fridges, freezers and clothes washers.

Try this test: Place a piece of paper in the door of your appliance. If you can pull it out easily or it slips out on its own, you need to either adjust the door or replace the old seal.

Save money (and headaches) in the future by fixing your doors and following the manufacturer's recommended service schedule.